



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS
Room 372, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, CA 90012 – (213) 974-1465

FOUNDER
Mrs. Sybil Brand

CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. Eleanor R. Montano

VICE CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. Helen Stathatos

Mr. Frank S. Bacio
Mr. Vito Cannella
Mr. James Cragin
Mr. John A. Hammargren
Mr. Carl E. Moore
Mr. Michael A. Russell

MINUTES **OF THE REGULAR MEETING** **OF APRIL 28, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Montano at 10:03 a.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chairperson Montano led the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ATTENDANCE - ROLL CALL

Present:

Chairperson Eleanor R. Montano
Vice Chairperson Helen Stathatos
Frank Bacio
Vito Cannella
John Hammargren
Carl Moore
Michael Russell

Excused Absence:

James Cragin

Staff:

B. Eugene Romig
Dedie Ward
Sherry Scates

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 21, 2004

On motion of Commissioner Hammargren, seconded by Commissioner Bacio and unanimously carried, the minutes of April 21, 2004 were approved with the following additions/corrections:

- **Page 3, last paragraph, last sentence should read:** ...but very old and need replacing *because the equipment is too small for the current staff.*
- **Page 4, Pomona Branch Court, last sentence should read: Area of significant concern:** ...the facility *has no security barriers whatever in the front of the court, which have been requested by deputies, and is an urgent security/safety issue. In addition, the facility is completely without security after 6:00 p.m....*

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Montano reported that she called Commissioner Cragin to wish him a belated happy birthday and to let him know he is in the Commissioners' thoughts. Commissioner Cragin sent his regards to the Commissioners.

TREASURER'S REPORT

No Change

CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

None

FACILITY/GROUP INSPECTION REPORTS

Citrus Branch Court

Commissioners Moore, Montano and Bacio visited this facility on April 22nd and were introduced to the new Division Chief, Richard J. Martinez, and were escorted by Officer in Charge, Sgt. Crawl, Bonus Deputy Lorraine Wells and Sr. Deputy Yliz. The facility was well maintained with an **overall rating of satisfactory**. Areas of concern: no panic button or alarm system to lock-up back door in hall #22, which is an **urgent safety issue**.

Deputies indicated that security/safety is hampered without color monitors inside and color cameras at the outside entrance, and the metal detector should be moved closer to the door. Since the entrance to the court was moved to the back of the building, (next door to the West Covina Sheriff's Department entrance), the line of people waiting to enter both facilities often extends well past the parking lot and adjacent homes. Additionally, there is a shortage of cells; cell #1 needs a slanted window.

Commissioners Moore and Hammargren recommended that the security of all courts be re-evaluated in light of the 9/11 attacks. This issue will be addressed with Sheriff Baca during his next visit.

Rio Hondo Branch Court

Commissioners Hammargren and Montano visited this facility at 11234 Valley Boulevard, El Monte on April 27th. The Officer in Charge was Sgt. Enriguez and Commissioners were escorted by Bonus Deputy Lou Frank. Commissioner Hammargren noted that this facility has an orientation check list for overtime personnel that is reviewed with all new staff and Commissioners agreed that this should be standard procedure at all courts. Training was up to date and the facility was clean and well maintained with an **overall rating of satisfactory**. Areas of concern: additional keys to the gun lockers are needed; undersized roll-out fire gear needs replacement; some fire extinguishers needed to be recharged and relocated to be readily accessible; color cameras are needed in the Sally Port; and a storage area is needed to eliminate the accumulation of gear, etc. in the hallway.

Commissioners suggested that the staff of both the court and the adjacent El Monte Sheriff's Station develop a mutual evacuation plan. The installation of monitors was underway and Commissioners pointed out that with the current desk arrangement, staff would have their backs to the monitors.

Culver City Branch Court

Commissioners Bacio and Moore visited this facility at 4130 Overland Boulevard on April 27th and were escorted by Officer in Charge, Sr. Deputy Tim Smith. As the lock up at this facility has not been used since 2000, there were no detainees in residence. The court was clean and well maintained with an **overall rating of satisfactory**. Areas of concern: no turn-out gear available because it had been loaned to another court; and the expensive Life-Scan unit is not being used because the lock-up is closed.

Commissioner Hammargren suggested that in the event some court facilities are closed or reorganized due to budget cuts, the Commission should put those reorganized facilities at the top of their inspection list.

Shamrock Cottage

Commissioners Stathatos and Cannella visited this facility at 198 Monterey Drive, Claremont on April 22nd and were escorted by Antoinette Sunday. This facility was very clean and well maintained with an **overall rating of**

excellent and with no areas of concern. This facility is in the process of expansion and will have another facility in 2005.

New Horizons – Sydia #2

Commissioner Stathatos and Canella visited this facility at 42 West Mountain View, Altadena on April 22nd and were initially escorted by Frank R. Smith, a resident juvenile, but were later joined by the owner, Jeannette Gray. This facility is very small and inadequate for its number of residents, and was given an **overall rating of unsatisfactory**. Areas of continuing concern: This facility, an on-going problem for several years, is poorly run; extremely small; marginally maintained and appears inadequate for 6 teenage boys. There is no place to study; the bedrooms are too small for double occupancy (beds are pushed up against the bathroom door); a limited supply of fresh food is in stock; the backyard swimming pool is covered with algae; and there is a back house that is rented out.

Commissioner Stathatos furnished letters from DCFS documenting both the Commission's concern for conditions at this facility and DCFS's letter to Children's Services Ombudsman, Department of Auditor-Controller, requesting an expedited audit of this facility back in April of 2000.

Following discussion, staff was asked to do the following:

- Contact DCFS to request an updated Standards and Procedures Manual so the Commission can determine the correct actions to be taken regarding this matter.
- Send a letter of Syndia #2's deficiencies to David Sanders, Executive Director, DCFS, with a copy to Robert Rogers, Supervisor, DCFS Group Home Support Services Group and the Group Home Licensing Bureau.
- Send a letter to Robert Rogers and Doris Reed, Supervisor, Group Home Audits, requesting that they attend an upcoming Business Meeting of the Commission to discuss the Syndia #2 deficiencies, as well as other issues.

New Horizons - #2

Commissioners Stathatos and Cannella visited this facility at 313 W. Las Flores, Altadena on April 26th. The door was unlocked, but no one was at home so Commissioners did not enter the facility.

New Horizons - #3

Commissioners Stathatos and Cannella visited this facility at 42 W. Mountain View, Altadena on April 26th. This facility is very small and inadequate for the number of residents, with an **overall rating of needs improvement or unsatisfactory** in most all areas.

NEW BUSINESS

Staff member B. Eugene Romig advised he has approached the Vocational Department of Hacienda-La Puente School District regarding the painting of the Commission's office by an inmate vocational training crew and is waiting for a return call. Mr. Romig further advised that he has been collecting photos and memorabilia relating to Sybil Brand for display at the County's memorial birthday tribute to her on May 12th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (TO BE PRESENTED AND PLACED ON THE AGENDA OF A FUTURE MEETING)

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11: 28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Scates/Dedie Ward
Staff, Commission Services